

Message Text

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44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CCO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 PC-01 OMB-01 SAJ-01

SCCT-01 SY-05 OPR-02 OC-05 EB-07 DHA-02 SCS-03 SCA-01

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O R 191327Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WAYHDC IMMEDIATE 3854

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

DIA/DOD WASHDC

USCINCSO

USAFSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 8252

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MILL, AR

SUBJECT: SITREP NO. 4: AIR FORCE REVOLT

REF: A) SMITH-FELDER TELCON B) BA-8247 AND PREVIOUS SITREPS (NOTAL)

1. AF REBELLION PROVED MORE LONG-LASTING THAN SEEMED TO BE THE CASE LAST NIGHT. AS OF THIS MORNING REBELS ARE STILL HOLDING MORON AND AEROPARQUE. AF AIRCRAFT OVERFLEW CITY SEVERAL TIMES BETWEEN 5:30 P.M. AND 10:00 P.M. DROPPING LEAFLETS CALLING ON OTHER ARMED SERVICES TO SUPPORT THEM, TO OUST MRS. PERON'S GOVERNMENT AND INSTALL GENERAL VIDELA AS CHIEF OF STATE. ADDITIONALLY, REBEL OFFICERS WERE ABLE TO SEIZE THREE RADIO STATIONS LAST NIGHT AND BROADCAST SAME APPEAL FOR ALMOST AN HOUR.

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2. IN CONFUSING EPISODE, BRIGADIER ORLANDO RAMON AGOSTI WAS APPOINTED CHIEF OF AIR FORCE JUST BEFORE MIDNIGHT, REPLACING FAUTARIO. INTERIOR MINISTER ROBLEDO ANNOUNCED THAT INSTITUTIONAL CRISIS HAS THUS BEEN SOLVED AND REBELLION WAS OVER--AT SAME TIME HE HAD TO ADMIT THAT MORON AND AEROPARQUE WERE STILL IN REBELLION. OBVIOUSLY, HOWEVER, SCOPE OF AF REBELLION HAD BY THEN TRANSCENDED SIMPLE DEMAND FOR FAUTARIO'S OUSTER. WHY REBEL OFFICERS RELEASED FAUTARIO IF THEY INTENDED TO GO ON WITH REVOLT IS A MYSTER. EARLIER REPORTS THAT THEY HAD MADE A DEAL--I.E., THEIR SAFETY FOR HIS RELEASE--WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN FALSE. ONE THESIS IS THAT ONCE REBELS BECAME AWARE OF DECREE TO NAME AGOSTI (WHICH APPARENTLY WAS DICTATED AROUND 2:00 P.M., THOUGH NOT PUBLISHED UNTIL LATE LAST NIGHT) THEY LOST FURTHER INTEREST IN FAUTARIO, RELEASED HIM AND WENT ABOUT BUSINESS OF TRYING TO TOPPLE THE GOVERNMENT. ANOTHER REPORT HAS IT THAT OFFICER ENTRUSTED TO GUARD FAUTARIO SIMPLY LET HIM GO. WHATEVER THE CASE, FAUTARIO IS NO LONGER A FACTOR.

3. KEY ELEMENT, OF COURSE, WILL BE ATTITUDE OF ARMY, AND TO LESSER EXTENT OF NAVY. SO FAR, NEITHER SERVICE HAS BEEN HEARD FROM. VIDELA RETURNED JUST BEFORE MIDNIGHT LAST NIGHT, HENCE, IT MAY BE THAT OFFICERS ARE WAITING FOR WORD FROM HIM AS TO WHAT THEY SHOULD DO. AS OF 2:00 A.M. VIDELA WAS STILL IN SESSION WITH HIS TOP OFFICERS.

4. MEANWHILE, CONGRESS LAST NIGHT BECAME SCENE OF INTENSE ACTIVITY. AS ONE OF SENATOR'S AIDE PUT IT TO EMBOFF LAST NIGHT, "POLITICIANS SENSE THAT THIS COULD EASILY EXPAND INTO FULL-SCALE GOLPE; HENCE, IF THEY ARE TO SAVE CONSTITUTIONALISM, AND THEMSELVES, THEY MUST PRE-EMPT GOLPE BY GETTING RID OF MRS. PERON THEMSELVES." THUS, IN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, DISSIDENT "WORKING GROUP" CALLED FOR MRS. PERON'S RESIGNATION AS PATRIOTIC GESTURE AND APPOINTMENT OF LUDER AS INTERIM PRESIENT TO DEFUSE THE CRISIS, IN THE ABSENCE OF WHICH THEY SUGGESTED IMMEDIATE IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS. SENATE ALSO RAISED POSSIBILITY OF REQUESTING MRS. PERON TO TAKE LEAVE OF ABSENCE OR TO RESIGN AND ASKED INTERIOR MINISTER ROBLEDO TO MEET WITH SENATE LEADERS. AS OF ABOUT 2:00 A.M., WHEN SENATORS AND DEPUTIES LEFT CONGRESS, HOWEVER, NO DEFINITE DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN OR MOTION PRESENTED. ONE REPORT INDICATES CARLOS PALACIO DEHEZA, OF "WORKING GROUP,"

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TALKED TO REBEL OFFICERS IN MORON LAST NIGHT TO ASK IF RESIGNATION OF MRS. PERON AND APPOINTMENT OF LUDER WOULD SATISFY THEIR DEMANDS. REPORTEDLY, HE WAS GIVEN A NEGATIVE REPLY AND TOLD THAT DISSIDENT OFFICERS WANT THE ARMED FORCES THEMSELVES TO TAKE OVER GOVERNMENT. THIS IN UNCONFIRMED REPORT, AND EVEN IF TRUE, REFLECTS ATTITUDE OF DISSIDENT OFFICERS AT MORON AND NOT NECESSARY THAT OF VIDELA, VIOLA, MASSERA AND OTHER TOP OFFICERS OF ARMY AND NAVY.

5. CGT AND 62 ORGANIZATIONS ISSUED STATEMENT LAST NIGHT INDICATING "RESPECT FOR RIGHT OF AF TO SETTLE ITS OWN INSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS."

6. COMMENT: WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT AF REBLLION WAS POORLY CONCEIVED, POORLY PLANNED AND WAS NOT COORDINATED WITH OTHER SERVICES. THEIR HESITATION IN JOINING IN IS THEREFORE UNDERSTANDABLE. AT THIS POINT, HOWEVER, IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT DYNAMICS, OR MOMENTUM, OF SITUATION MAY NOT CARRY THEM ALONG WHETHER THEY WILL JOIN IN OR NOT. WE ARE ENDEAVORING TO GET SOME READING OF ARMY ATTITUDE THIS MORNING AND WILL REPORT SOONEST.
HILL

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